

Washington State Senator • 30th Legislative District

Tracey J. Eide

Legislative Report

December 2005



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Dear Neighbor:

With the 2005 session a few months behind us — and the 2006 session just around the corner — I want to share with you some of the notable accomplishments we made for our seniors. Whether you qualify for that early-bird special or have family members who do, these are issues that resonate with us all.

They certainly do with me. My grandmother lives in a nursing home. My father-in-law is a resident of an Alzheimer's care facility. Every time I visit them, I am reminded of the sacrifice of this "Greatest Generation," as Tom Brokaw calls them.

With the aging of the baby boomers in the next 15 years will come a doubling of the number of people who are 65 or older. And with the cost of health care still escalating, our challenges in caring for these seniors will be considerable.

As a legislator, I am fiercely dedicated to ensuring that our seniors are taken care of. Our foremost priority must be helping our seniors lead healthy and productive lives, with independence and dignity.

Here is a recap of legislation I was proud to support that benefits seniors:

■ To look at keeping extended health care affordable, we created a Long-Term Care Task Force. This group will explore how to finance long-term care — both private and public options — and look for ways to improve how

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that care is delivered. It will also look at how we can better manage chronic care conditions so that seniors will pay less and stay healthier.

■ Research shows that healthful eating habits by seniors reduce illness and may extend longevity. That's why I supported the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. It allows those eligible seniors to redeem farmers market checks for produce from farmers markets and roadside stands. This innovative approach to promoting nutritious food choices — and better health — will serve 8,000 seniors. Federal Way's farmers market opens again in mid-May.



■ If you've ever suddenly become ill and needed to be treated immediately, you know how stressful it can be worrying about whether

a particular health-care professional has access to your medical records. Sometimes, too, you want to see your medical records to review your treatment.

We passed a bill that creates an advisory board to make recommendations on how to set up an electronic medical records system in the state. Wouldn't it be handy to schedule your appointments, get test results and refill prescriptions online, if you chose to? And wouldn't you have peace of mind from having your records instantly accessible in the case of an emergency?



■ Many Washington seniors are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase the prescriptions they rely on to stay healthy. Too many are gambling on their health because they can't afford the drug regimen recommended by their doctor. This year, the Legislature used the state's purchasing power to leverage lower prescription drug prices by expanding the state's prescription drug program. This law allows uninsured citizens, private businesses and labor unions to join the state's drug purchasing consortium, making them eligible for a discount on prescription

drugs. We are also working with Canada and other nations to import safe and effective prescription drugs at more affordable prices. The state Board of Pharmacy will submit a waiver to the federal Food and Drug Administration that will authorize the state to work with wholesalers in Canada and elsewhere. When the waiver is approved, people will be able to purchase imported medicines at their neighborhood pharmacy.

■ Seniors need control over how their personal information is gathered, stored and used. Internet criminals have developed strategies to deceive computer users into disclosing personal information. Others steal mail from mailboxes or from garbage cans. Criminals then use that information to drain victims' bank accounts and fraudulently obtain credit in the victims' names. These shameless practices cost



billions of dollars and untold inconvenience. That's why I supported legislation that allows victims to "freeze" access to their credit reports while they restore their credit. We also passed a measure that requires police departments to issue reports on cases on identity theft so we can determine how prevalent this crime is.

In the upcoming session, I look forward to working hard to represent the interests of seniors in the areas of health care, insurance and public safety.



It continues to be my honor and pleasure to serve as the 30th Legislative District's senator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Tracey J. Eide". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Tracey J. Eide
Majority Floor Leader



EIDE-GRAM : Please Stay In Touch

Your comments and concerns are always appreciated. Please take a moment to tell me what's on your mind.

Dear Tracey, _____

Name, address, phone number and e-mail (optional)

Please detach this piece and insert in a stamped, addressed envelope.
Mail to: Senator Tracey J. Eide PO Box 40430, Olympia, WA 98504-0430.

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♻️ Legislative Report

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